1:Herskovits & Herskovits E-5 (1928-1929) 1934
SR8 Bush Negroes SR8
Saramacca

834 848 "Don't go off into the bush with a man. A child born to you will have a bad bush god, if you do," she added as an afterthought.

5

123 179 In the other corner, Chief And'u, the bassia, and about half a dozen men were talking of the great book about their ancestors which the white man had.

"It is large so," said the chief to one of the older men, indicating an imaginary size which multiplied the size of the actual volume at least tenfold. "And people say it has in it pictures of the Apuku gods, small as we ourselves know them, and a picture of the evil Apuku who appear as fire in the distance. . . . Mati, white men have gone into the Kromanti houses in the country of our ancestors and have made pictures!"

"It is impossible!"

"I want to see!"

The old man said, "I will not look. Books are not for us, mati."

"But mati, the G'aman has heard, and he wants to see."

The old man shook his head. He would have nothing of pictures that figured what should never have been allowed to be photographed.

It seemed prudent to give the conversation a new turn. 137 Down river, the men had said that a man of this village had lately found a new *neku* liana. Was it so?

"The man who found it was my son," said the old man, "you should have come for the dance. You would have seen [802] how we do things here in the bush. But pictures you could not take. No, mati, if you photograph, you take the soul."

824 796 The festivities for the find had been especially joyful, he explained, for the boy had only recently come by his gods, and this had been yet another proof that he would serve his family capably. For though the find was his own, all [318] his relatives in the mother's line would enjoy its use. Here- [326] after, when the poison of its leaves and its slender branches

2:Kahn D-5 (1922-1930) 1931
SR8 Bush Negroes SR8

his much-loved ornamentation. Leg-bands of cotton cloth are frequently worn by both sexes, and where wire can be secured it is fashioned into arm or leg coils and paraded proudly. Many necklaces and bracelets are used because they constitute magic amulets against evil spirits. Our own bracelets and necklaces can probably be traced back to this same origin. The hair is another means of personal decoration, and therefore it is always dressed with deliberation. Carefully made partings divide the black skull into geometrical designs.

Despite the scanty nature of their clothing, the Djukas are quite modest, and never expose themselves. If a bahkra does, they avert their heads. It is a curious reflection on civilized morality that the almost naked blacks possess a large amount of dignified restraint, while the uncomfortably clothed white man is shameless in his nudity.

Here and there inside the dark huts can be seen bits of extraordinary wood carving. These are not crude utensils; every stirring-paddle or comb is a work of art worthy of a place in a museum, designed and executed in a way that is far from "primitive." The only way to acquire these objects is to bargain for them in Dutch money or tobacco, or cheap knick-knacks. Among the more distant villages money is use-

2: Kahn D-5 (1922-1930) 1931
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the age of about thirty-five. Another motive for separation is a husband's inadequacy as a hunter, fisher, and provider. Or the woman may simply be bored with him and like some other man better. The husband is liable to be teased a bit by his friends, but after a few days he forgets and marries again. 586

Open licentiousness or sexual suggestiveness is never seen in public. The personal modesty of the Djukas has already been noted. Exposure of themselves, or public intercourse, such as is common in some tribes in Africa, never occurs. After the dances, for instance, no open promiscuousness occurred. There is one orgiastic dance known as the *ogalusa*, which means "mating like loose hogs." 834 [786 535]

Two aphrodisiacs are used liberally by the natives. One is prepared by infusing the bark of a bush vine called *debbil dour* with water or weak alcohol. The liquid when drunk is supposed to give an erection of several hours' duration. Some of it was brought back by the expedition and tried on laboratory animals, with no effect. It is well known, however, that witch doctors will substitute other roots or herbs when giving their medicines to white men. 832

Another aphrodisiac that we found used among the Aucaners is the seed of the mucca-mucca plant, which grows on the banks of most of the rivers of the colonies. The seed is mashed into fragments and then inserted into the urethra. This acts as a tremendous irritant and is supposed to bring about erections of long duration. If used frequently, a persistent and disagreeable type of urethritis is produced.

At the hospital near the mines of the Surinam Bauxite

/122 cont./

846 834 856 Interruption of conjugal relations after the birth. For three months after delivery the mother must stay away from men and even avoid touching them. Conjugal relations must be interrupted until the child begins to walk alone (eleven to 14 months). However, it is tolerated (but disapprovingly) that they be interrupted only for the time until the child begins to drag himself on his knees /123/ (eight months). They cite the example of Baïna's wife who has puny children after pregnancies at too short intervals.

[842]

846 834 862 178 593 Actually, the interruption of conjugal relations tends to be reduced more and more, the women having condensed milk available and tending to reduce the duration of breast feeding.

Each woman acts as she wishes in this respect; the husband has no power to restrain her.

The Name

551 553 Existence of several independent names. Each Boni has two names, the gaã nɛm or big name, given by the father, and the pikin nɛm or little name, given by the mother.

These two names are given in totally independent fashion. Generally the pikin nɛm is given first; in former days they used to wait until the child was six to eight months old; nowadays it is given at the end of a few weeks. The head of the lineage does not intervene either in the choice or the giving of the name.

As a matter of fact, nearly three-quarters of the Boni are designated by one single name, either because the father and mother agreed to give the same name or because one of the two names fell into disuse.

To these two principal names may be added any number of names and cognomens given by the grandparents and later by friends or spouse; often one of the names ends by being given

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582 Generally speaking, the custom of the Refugee Blacks used to consider as immoral the marriage of a very young girl to an old man, or of a very young boy to an adult woman.

588 178 The weakening of family morals is clearly demonstrated by two events which happened during the summer of 1960. A boy of thirteen and a half, K... of Boniville, left his guardian to join an Assisi woman, A..., 20 years older than he and with a very bad reputation to boot; some months later his example was imitated /146/ by a boy of 14 who began living with a

[684] [613] woman of 29. Nothing like that had ever been seen, and people inveighed against the scandal of it; but in both cases, guardians and lineage heads showed themselves incapable of making their authority respected by force.

882 [562] Marriage of girls. It can still be said (although things are in the process of changing rapidly) that girls, kweyi umã, occupy a place apart in the thought of the Refugee Blacks; the reprobation which embraces women does not extend to them.

882 834 [291] People say that girls "have good manners," and in fact most of them, although naked except for a little apron, have a reserved attitude, a becoming bearing, which contrast with the attitude of the married women. To tell the truth, this virtue is not so much due to natural inclinations as to the strict

[593] vigilance with which their mothers surround them. The mothers literally do not let them out of their sight and permit no man to speak to them out of their presence. "Until dawn, until the cock crows, she keeps vigil," says the song, alluding to the mother who watches over her daughter's virtue. If a girl

[836] [597] comes to lose her virginity without being properly married, pɔti na ɔsu, "established in a house," it is a dishonor for her mother and her near relatives.

/158 cont./

848 If children are born of these irregular liaisons, the mother
[784] takes care to know with certainty who the father is, for if there
[753] were any doubt, the child, respecting a kina which would not be his own, would contract leprosy. On this subject the Boni
842 have a remarkable belief: they think that it is the first man with whom a woman has had relations after the end of a menstrual period who is likely to make her pregnant.

836 These adventures always involve gifts in kind (cloth,
431 jewels); so the men who have the most success with women are always short of money.

581 A woman who has lived thus in notorious fashion has a little more difficulty than another in finding another husband, but if she is young and winsome she succeeds.

548 Prostitution as such is very rare in Boni country, and the women who give themselves over to it openly (three or four for all the villages on the French bank) have generally left the
[836] tribe to settle in the gold miners' villages. Dissoluteness is not considered dishonorable by the Refugee Blacks when it is carried on within the tribe and when it has no other purpose but pleasure; but prostitution is judged shameful.

834 Except for these few prostitutes, we have never heard it
648 said that a Boni woman had relations with a European; on this point tribal discipline is observed with extreme rigor.

581 Conclusion. The average duration of marriages, which was
[178] from 15 to 20 years for the preceding generation, tends to become shorter and can be estimated nowadays at about ten years.
[191] In spite of this evolution, the stability of marriages among the Refugee Blacks remains noticeably greater than that observed
548 among the black populations of South America. Among them is not seen the form of prostitution so widespread in South America, the supported mistress who does not work and who lives entirely at the expense of her successive lovers.

/249 cont./

751 [787] Possession by a Kumẽnti gives, they say, invulnerability during the time of the trance, but in his ordinary state the individual remains vulnerable (they say only that in case of danger the gita "rises" immediately).

Someone who has a man nẽŋga ɔbia has no trances of possession, but they state that he is permanently invulnerable (except for breaking of the kina). In order to obtain this ɔbia one must have himself "washed" for a very long time by an elder who knows the leaves in question. He delivers them already crushed so that no one may be able to know this secret outside of the son or nephew to whom he bequeaths it.

It is necessary to continue to be washed four times a year for 15 days each time, to keep up the force of the ɔbia.

[515] During these 15 days one bathes three times a day, in secret (in principle nobody knows that you have this ɔbia).

[834] During these periods one must have no relation with a woman, even to talk to her.

They state that someone who has a man nẽŋge ɔbia can be struck by blows of a machete and even receive a gunshot with impunity.

[173] They believe that this ɔbia, in the past called man feti ɔbia, was obtained by the ancestors at the time of the wars against the whites; still today it inspires an unshakeable confidence. /250/ In October, 1952 we saw M..., a man of 45 [164] [752] with great good sense, make a deep gash in his leg while cutting a liana, in spite of his ɔbia. Doubt did not cross his mind for a second: he told us that certainly he had unknowingly eaten something contrary to the kina of the ɔbia. Since we were working near some villages, he went immediately to find the master of the remedy to have the power restored. For nothing in the world would he have left for a long round of work in the bush with the feeling that he was at the mercy of an accident.

/254 cont./

841 Woman's magic power. The Refugee Blacks assume that a woman, during her menstrual periods, is impure and has the power to destroy the power of ɔbia. So during these periods she must withdraw into a special hut, munu ɔsu, and prepare her meals in special dishes; she may not prepare her husband's food, for by doing this she would destroy the power of his ɔbia, and must abstain from touching objects he habitually uses, particularly his gun, which would lose its good points for shooting. Even in the little farming habitations which consist of only several huts, one may be sure that one of them serves as a munu ɔsu.

841 343 462 [465] The munu ɔsu are very simple sheds built by the women themselves, using reclaimed materials taken from huts being demolished; some belong to one woman only; for others, three or four women get together. They have recourse to men only for assembling the framework, remunerating them with several cans of couac or several baskets of yams.

841 /255/ A man who has a powerful ɔbia like the man nɛŋge ɔbia must abstain from speaking to a woman who has her menses.

[751] The Boni assume there are women wicked enough to willfully hide their menses in order to destroy the power of a man's ɔbia, but he who has a good man nɛŋge ɔbia cannot be a dupe: the iron circle warns him of the danger by squeezing his arm.

184 841 68 According to Mr. W. F. van Lier, the act of willfully hiding her menses is for the Djuka one of the gravest offenses a woman can commit, and the most severe punishments are inflicted on her. It is not the same with the Boni: in such a case a woman risks only being insulted and banned.

752 834 171 Another deeply rooted belief among the Refugee Blacks, and which exists with many Creoles, is the necessity for the

752 /255 cont./
834 Obiaman who treats a wound made by a firearm to observe
[191] chastity during the whole duration of the treatment. It is for this reason that the Boni hesitate to have gunshot wounds cared for in hospitals.

784 Kina. The interdictions of the Refugee Blacks generally have
[262] to do with food. There are five categories of them to our knowledge:

[753] --Bwasi kina, basic kina, mark of patrilineages, the breaking of which gives leprosy;

--Akka kina, often called gadu kina, established by divination and believed to be imposed by the akka;

--Gadu kina, mark of possession by a divinity;

--Obia kina, interdiction attached to each object involving a magic power, and which must be observed for this power to last;

--Finally, local kina, particularly the kina dɛ, days of rest, going back to the idea of the day of rest of the local divinity. They observe, for example, that the Mana River has a kina dɛ on Sunday. The Saramaka observe it strictly. The Boni we took on the Mana in 1949 went to find out from the Saramaka, and asked us to stop navigation on Sunday,
[648] for this kina was very urgent. It is noteworthy however that the Boni bow in such circumstances before the will of the Europeans, as with respect to their own kina dɛ of Friday; in effect they are assuming that if they are ordered to be on duty, it is the European alone who bears the responsibility for breaking the kina.

[428] It is possible that the kina alluded to by Mr. W. F. Van
[114] Lier and which, among the Djuka, would be imposed on a
[613] whole matrilineage are also local kina; in any case no kina is transmissible through the mother, all the Refugee Blacks are explicit on that point.

/255 cont./

784 262 A... of the Dju lo, about 28 years old in 1958, must observe six kina:

--The cayman and the jaguar as bwasi kina.

--The otter (yundu) as akka kina. /256/

These three kina have been imposed on him since his first years, but the meaning of them was explained to him only later on.

[751] --The eel (mānsi) was imposed on him as a kina by his father when the latter gave him a man nɛ̃ŋge ɔbia, ɔbia of protection against machete or gun, materialized by an iron bracelet.

[841] [834] To this ɔbia is attached another kina. A... must not speak to a woman having her menstrual period.

[751] [787] --Finally, the crab (kaabu), kina attached to an ɔbia of which the man concerned only spoke with reticence, probably a Kumɛ̃nti bui (bracelet of Kumɛ̃nti, instrument of divination).

A... has no gadu kina in the strict sense of the term.

There exists no food kina common to all the Boni; the cayman is generally forbidden to them as bwasi kina, associated with another animal; but this is not absolute; we know at least one Boni who has not received this kina.

If someone has broken a kina inadvertently, he can have himself cleansed of this offense by ɔbiaman. But if he broke it willfully, he cannot escape the punishment attached to the offense.

'45 Beliefs about twins. They have the idea that twins and children who follow twins are of a nature different from other men, participating in a divine principle.

Twins cannot live (since they do not belong to ordinary humanity) if they are not treated with a special remedy known only to certain lineages especially rich in twins.